



Role of the Veterinarian in **Animal Identification**

Your clients will likely have questions about animal identification, both for official disease program work and for possible management use, so it is important to stay current on the latest recommendations. As this component of NAIS develops, USDA will provide information on its Web site at <http://www.usda.gov/nais>. You can also call your State, Territory, or Tribal NAIS Administrator at any time, or refer your clients to these individuals with specific questions.

As an accredited veterinarian, you may also be able to provide the devices and readers as a service to your clients as an AIN Manager/Reseller.

When completing CVIs (both electronic and paper copies) and international health certificates, “840” AINs used for NAIS can be recorded as official individual animal identification.



Animal Tracing

Animal tracing is the third component of NAIS and offers another option for animal management and protecting animal health. Several of the animal tracking databases (ATDs) are operational. Livestock owners can choose an ATD—operated and maintained by private industry groups or States—and report certain animal movements that might pose a significant risk of disease transmission.

As these systems “mature” and receive additional animal movement records, animal health officials will be able to access timely, accurate records that show where animals have been and what contact they may have had with other animals. The ATD providers may also offer management programs and services, source- and age-verification programs, or other enhanced marketing opportunities using NAIS standards and identification devices. The information resulting from such services is entirely outside the scope of NAIS and is administered separately in the private sector. However, the harmonization of such standards allows producers to expand the use of NAIS devices and data standards for other reasons that may provide advantages to their businesses.



Reporting Animal Movement

When producers participate in the voluntary animal tracing component, they will work directly with State or private service providers. Animal movement records will be securely held in ATDs owned, managed, and controlled by the private sector or the States.

USDA realizes that attempting to record all animal movements is not practical. The focus of NAIS is on the type of movement and its potential impact on spreading a disease. As an accredited veterinarian, you can help your clients understand which movements are most important to report.

If producers elect to report animal movements, they are encouraged to do so within 24 hours or by the close of the next business day. The following information should be provided:

- Animal identification number (AIN)
- Premises identification number (PIN) where the event takes place
- Date
- Nature of the event (event code)

The chart on page 42 provides a preliminary list of animal movement examples and the importance of reporting such events to an ATD, keeping practicality in mind. Those events listed as “high” should be reported; those listed as “low” might not need to be reported. However, any entering or exiting movement can be reported to the ATD if the producer/owner so desires. From a liability standpoint, some producers might view it as actually decreasing their liability regarding husbandry responsibilities by reporting that specific animals left their premises on a specific date and were no longer in their control.

If USDA needs animal movement and location information to respond to an animal health event—such as an outbreak of avian influenza, brucellosis, or tuberculosis—data will be requested from the private or State databases through the Animal Trace Processing System (ATPS). Federal law protects individuals’ private information and confidential business information from public disclosure.



Movement Reporting in Action

Since 2005, Michigan has installed RFID readers in all of the state's livestock markets and seven slaughter plants where the majority of the state's cattle are sent. Cattle in the State are required to use RFID identification, so the State-purchased readers easily record animal movements through the markets and slaughter plants. Should the need arise, Michigan officials will quickly be able to trace animals between the markets, slaughter plants, and farms of origin.

Type of Movement	Relative Reporting Importance	Explanation
Selling an animal – private, public market, or auction	High	Animals from different sources that are commingled have the potential to spread disease and should be reported.
National/regional exhibition or sporting event	High	Large shows with animals traveling from a wide geographic area merit reporting.
Treatment at a veterinary teaching hospital, referral practice	High	Animals could contact animals of varying health status from a wide geographic area, and this merits reporting.
Local exhibitions or sporting events	Low	The risk of exposure and spread still exists, but the disease cases would be more localized. Providing CVIs with premises registration and animal identification is commonly practiced and warranted for some species.
Local trail ride	Low	The risk of exposure and spread still exists, but the disease cases would be more localized.
Moving animals within an operation or premises (between pastures)	Not applicable	These types of movements are considered within the operation's management. The entire operation would be considered a single premises during an outbreak.
Taking a home-raised animal to a custom butcher	Not applicable	If the animal was born and raised on your operation and slaughtered for personal use, this movement does not need to be reported. However, if the product is to be sold or distributed, State regulations must be followed.